



**Vounteer Management Resources
Hospital Programs and Associations**



**Volunteer
Toronto**

Role of Volunteer Managers and Chairs

Who is a volunteer manager?

If you work with volunteers or have any responsibility for volunteers as members of your team, you are a volunteer manager. That might mean recruiting volunteers, being a contact person for volunteers, or even training them in their roles. You may, as a team, decide to elect a particular member of your group to be a dedicated volunteer manager. It might be this person's sole responsibility to recruit, train, and oversee volunteers. However, the reality is that in many organizations, volunteer management is a responsibility that is shared between hospital staff and volunteer leaders.

Shared approach

Shared volunteer management can create a collaborative atmosphere and avoid overwhelming one person with all of the duties related to coordinating volunteers. You should know that communication is the key to success. Every person involved in managing volunteers must know what they are responsible for. Try dividing tasks like recruitment, supervision and discipline.

What does the chair do?

Committee and council chairs are a unique kind of volunteer manager. Though they never have "Volunteer manager" in their title, a lot of what they do matches the functions of a designated volunteer administrator. Chairs are often required to supervise and support others in their committee, assign and manage specific roles, recruit new members and volunteers and even provide feedback or deal with difficult members.



Make it clear to volunteers

Use the volunteer management approach that best meets your needs. You want to avoid sending mixed messages to support volunteers: Imagine being a support volunteer and hearing one thing about your responsibilities from one volunteer manager and then something else entirely from another! Mixed messaging could lead to support volunteers leaving the group — definitely not something you want to have happen.

Unique role of chairs

Chairs play a role in retention and motivation for volunteers and members of their committees. By ensuring that committee members are getting something out of their work it can be easy to keep everyone motivated and interested. However, it may be necessary to determine the level of work a volunteer needs to do and make sure it is a focus of their involvement with your committee. One of the best ways to encourage this is to increase the members with titles or roles, giving value to their work and contributions.

Volunteer Program Planning Template

To help you plan out your volunteer program, use this action planning tool based on the main components needed for a successful volunteer program.

ACTION PLAN				
<p>Goal: <i>Identify the goal of your volunteer program. This goal should contribute to your organization's mission, and should fit within your organization's strategic plan.</i></p>				
ACTION	TIMELINE	PEOPLE	RESOURCES	MEASUREMENT
<p><i>List each action that will be taken in order to reach the goal.</i></p> <p>Recruiting volunteers</p>	<p><i>Identify the intended start and end dates for each action.</i></p>	<p><i>Identify the person responsible for overseeing each action, as well as any others who will be involved in its implementation.</i></p>	<p><i>Identify all resources needed to complete the action, such as money, transportation, and materials.</i></p>	<p><i>Identify how you will measure success once you have completed each action.</i></p>
Supervising volunteers				
Motivating volunteers				

6 Approaches to Communication

Being an effective volunteer supervisor requires good communication skills. Adapted from Heron’s model of intervention, these six approaches to communications will encourage better dialogue between you and your volunteers and foster greater performance in your projects and programs.

STYLE	APPROACH	EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATION
“TELLING”	Be a Guide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give advice and guidance Tell them what to do 	If I were in your place I would... In that situation, you need to... In my opinion, you should... When that kind of situation happens it’s better to... I think you should...
	Be a Great Source of Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain background and principles Help the person understand concepts and practices 	This article/book/blog is a good source of information The context and background of that is situation is... In this sector, this how we.... The best sources of information in the sector are...
	Be an Honest Mirror <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge their thinking Tell them what you think is holding them back Help them avoid making the same mistake again 	What would you do differently next time? What can we learn from this? How do you think you contributed to that outcome? Why do you think that keeps happening? How can you take this from thought to action?
“FACILITATING”	Be a Friendly Ear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help the person express their feelings Provide empathy 	How did you feel about...? It must be difficult (frustrating, confusing etc.) to... Do you have any concerns about...? Is there anything else you want to discuss? Are you comfortable with your decision?
	Be a Set of New Eyes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask questions to encourage fresh thinking and a new point of view Encourage the generation of different options and points of view 	What do you think would happen if... What’s the best thing that could happen? Brainstorm 10 different ways you could reach this objective. If (someone they admire) were in this situation, what do you think they would do? Which option you’ve mentioned seems most exciting to you?
	Be a Cheerleader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide praise Show them they have your support 	Congratulations, you deserve it! You are qualified for that position. That’s a great idea! You are working hard towards your objective What did you do to accomplish that?

The Importance of Training

Training is an opportunity to:

- » Provide volunteers with specific information about their role
- » Ensure volunteers have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their roles safely and effectively
- » Explore volunteer boundaries or other important topics deeply
- » Provide volunteers with learning related to their personal or professional goal

When to train volunteers

Training should be provided at the start of a volunteer's role but also on an ongoing, proactive basis. When possible, provide training regularly throughout the volunteer experience – including monthly in-person trainings or online offerings. Some training can or should be mandatory while others can be optional and more beneficial for the volunteer than the organization specifically.

Ongoing training

Higher-risk roles will usually require more ongoing training. For instance, if a volunteer is engaged to provide support to clients with serious illnesses, training should be provided up front and refreshed throughout the volunteer's engagement on the necessary knowledge of maintaining safe and healthy practice with these clients.

Adult learners

Most of your volunteers are “adult learners,” individuals who are not currently in a formal learning environment. Adult learners tend to be internally motivated, self-directed and goal-oriented. You should focus your training efforts on using practical tools like games, scenarios, case studies and assessments to enhance the learning process.



How does learning happen?

Learning is the process of transforming a person's previously held knowledge, skills and attributes. This takes place through two main stages: sensory intake, which is how someone takes in information; and processing and interpreting the information, comparing with their own knowledge and experiences. Examples for each include:



Sensory Intake

- » Hearing instruction or stories from a facilitator
- » Seeing handouts, slides, videos or other visual media
- » Experimenting with a case study, role play or activity relevant to the learning material



Process & Interpret

- » Using individual reasoning methods
- » Comparing new information with what a learner already knows
- » Referencing past experiences or held beliefs and applying this to their own context

Planning Orientation

A volunteer orientation should include three components:

Social

- » Introduces volunteers to each other and staff, welcomes volunteers to the team
- » Helps to place volunteers into the broader scope of the organization, especially in terms of other staff, volunteers, senior management and structure
- » Orients volunteers to the organization’s culture/etiquette (e.g., dress code, where they can find/store food and drinks, whether people take breaks together, etc.)

Position

- » Gives volunteers more information about their specific role
- » Provides a deeper understanding of how that position contributes to the mission
- » Lays out position expectations – standards of performance, deadlines
- » Explains volunteer evaluation procedure (when, how, how often)

System

- » Describes the history and structure of the organization
- » Gives context to the volunteer’s role in the organization’s work
- » Shows the “bigger picture” of the organization in relation to the volunteer
- » Covers relevant policies and procedures, includes signing important paperwork

Use this chart to determine the method you’ll use to cover each important area of training:

TOPIC	METHOD
Meeting supervisors/staff/other volunteers	
Learning about organization history	
Filling out paperwork/forms	
Understanding boundaries and requirements	
Getting to know the facility or activity space	
Learning about evaluation	

Determining What You're Looking For

Using this tool, you'll be able to identify the skills, attitude and knowledge you're seeking in a volunteer candidate. On this page, you'll find an example already filled out. Look for red flags that might cause an issue for this candidate. On the next page is a blank worksheet you can use when interviewing candidates.

Sample position: Host Program Volunteer

	WHAT AM I LOOKING FOR?	BASIC	GOOD	EXCELLENT	WHAT QUESTIONS MIGHT HELP ME DISCOVER THIS?
SKILL	<i>Ability to speak French</i>	Can understand words and meaning of questions, spoken slowly with one repetition if necessary. Can understand and ask basic questions on the phone in French. Pronunciation is understandable.	Understands words and meanings of questions with no repetition and mostly correct grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Can answer questions with little time for premeditation.	Speaks French fluently. Can speak very comfortably on the phone. Vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and written French are correct.	Pourquoi désirez-vous devenir bénévole? Où avez-vous entendu parler de notre programme? Pourquoi désirez-vous être bénévole avec des personnes nouvellement-arrivées?
ATTITUDE	<i>Patience</i>	Can cite a situation, not related to newcomers, demonstrating patience while offering assistance. Indicates importance of listening to point of view of the other.	Understands culture differences and how these affect basic understanding of certain situations.	Has a 2+ years of experience with this specific type interaction. Mentions using different words or examples to facilitate understanding.	Lead question: Describe a situation where you had to demonstrate patience, particularly in a situation with a person who was a newcomer? Probe: How were you trying to help? What did you do? What were the results?
KNOWLEDGE	<i>Knowledgeable about activities & services in Toronto, particularly those of interest to newcomers</i>	Capable and willing to research information (can name three sources of information and how to access these). Is knowledgeable about and can get around easily with the TTC.	Enhanced knowledge of low cost leisure activities in Toronto (can name 5). Good knowledge of low cost stores and services in Toronto and where to get specialty foods.	Excellent knowledge of free activities in Toronto (can name more than 5). Excellent knowledge of service agencies geared to newcomers. Has positive previous experience helping newcomers to learn about Toronto.	What type of activities could you do with a newcomer that would be low-cost and interesting? How would you go about finding activities you could do together?

Red Flags - Greater desire to learn French than to help newcomers
- Unwilling to make 6-month commitment

	WHAT AM I LOOKING FOR?	BASIC	GOOD	EXCELLENT	WHAT QUESTIONS MIGHT HELP ME DISCOVER THIS?
SKILL					
ATTITUDE					
KNOWLEDGE					

Red Flags

Recruiting and Screening Youth



Recruitment strategy

When recruiting new volunteers, consider your:

- » Internal recruitment strategy: recruitment begins from within. Communicate on-going and new needs to staff and volunteers within your organization.
- » External recruitment strategy: recruit outside of your organization through social media, volunteer centres, community offices and more

Don't forget your website - is it an effective recruitment tool? Where else do you post volunteer needs?

Cause-based recruiting

- » Consider places to promote your organization's volunteer needs where your cause resonates.
- » Begin at home: communicate your volunteer needs to your organization's community – staff, clients, employers of volunteers, other stakeholders.
- » In your messaging, place your cause in broader context of social change/justice/civic society.

When recruiting youth

- » Youth may not have enough working or volunteering experience to fill a resume – consider using another way to ask for their transferable skills and experiences
- » Remember that many youth may have never been interviewed before, so you may want to introduce what interviews are and how they work before you begin
- » Be clear about what to expect in the screening process and how many steps there will be

Skills-based recruiting

- » Consider where you would find people who have, or want to develop, the skills or abilities you need. Are they retired teachers or bus drivers? Newcomers to Canada? Students or young professionals?
- » Diverse sources of volunteers can be approached with role descriptions that identify actual abilities: sitting or standing, basic English, virtual availability.

When screening youth

- » Youth will be in school during work hours, so you'll need to setup other times (like early evenings or weekends) for interviewing
- » Sometimes, youth may not be able to get police checks, so be sure you require them
- » References are a useful tool for higher-risk roles, but most youth may not have professional references; it's ok to use personal references
- » Always follow up with every candidate, even if you don't choose them, so they know the status of their application

Five Tips for Engaging Youth

Strong online presence

A positive and relatable presence online and consistent use of social media accounts can definitely help increase youth engagement.

Don't forget your organization's own website can be an effective tool to engage youth. As long as your website can be found by a simple Google search and has an easy-to-navigate interface, you're good to go. Always keep your information up to date and provide regular updates with visuals to keep your youth volunteers informed of your organization's mission and endeavours.

Positive environment

Teenagers can sometimes find volunteering a scary prospect as they are vulnerable to unfamiliar settings. The best way to overcome this is by ensuring volunteers feel comfortable in the environment they'll be working in.

Match youth with roles that fit their skill set, talents, interests and level of commitment. Always clearly explain the organization's policies, safety procedures and schedules. Also encourage open communication between staff and volunteers. Be welcoming and supportive of any concerns of youth, especially when it comes to carrying out tasks they don't feel comfortable doing. They should be able to speak up about anything they are uncertain about. Finally, allow youth to interact with other youth volunteers from time to time. The social benefits of volunteering are important to most youth

They're students first

High school students have an obvious commitment during their weekdays: attending school. Since this impacts their availability to volunteer, organizations should offer shifts during evenings, weekends, vacations like March break, long weekends and the summer.

Weekday evening shifts should begin at a time that gives students ample time to get to the location from school, and should end early enough for the student to get home comfortably without risking their safety by travelling late at night.

Ask for and give feedback

Organizations should encourage volunteers to give feedback on their experience both during and after their volunteer experience. This could be done with a survey or exit interview, for example. Feedback can go both ways, any positive feedback and constructive criticism on how the volunteer is performing my role will help youth grow as volunteers. Regular one-on-one reports are great, as are organization newsletters to update your volunteers on the progress of the organization's work as whole.

Recognize your volunteers

Most youth don't generally expect anything in return for their time spent volunteering except for fond memories and a sense of altruism, but it's always nice to get something cool! Any perks you can offer your volunteers, such as an appreciation party or concert tickets, will always brighten their days and add to their experience. And at the very least, a heartfelt "thank you" goes a long way.

Being Youth Ready

Use the following statements to determine what you're doing well and the areas where you're not succeeding. If not, think of a step you can take to help you address this.

Part 1 Awareness and realities of youth	AM I DOING THIS WELL?	IF NOT, WHAT CAN I DO?
1 A person in our organization has been tasked with finding information and/or developing tools specifically for recruiting youth volunteers		
2 Our organization has a standardized definition of youth (e.g. persons under 30, individuals 14-19, etc.)		
3 Our organization's board, staff and volunteers are receptive to the integration of youth volunteers		
4 Our organization currently offers flexible schedules to meet the realities of youth volunteer commitments		
5 Our organization is prepared to give youth volunteers authority and autonomy to lead, manage or direct their own initiatives		
6 Our organization understands and expects that volunteerism may mean different things to youth, and will work with youth to create a common meaning		
7 Our organization seeks to utilize the new ideas, vitality and fresh outlook of youth volunteers to encourage growth and development		

Part 2 Recruiting and integrating youth		AM I DOING THIS WELL?	IF NOT, WHAT CAN I DO?
1	Volunteer managers/coordinators are able to meet with and interview youth in familiar surroundings – schools, community/recreation centres		
2	Our organization’s website has a section specifically for and geared toward youth		
3	Our organization regularly receives volunteer applications from youth		
4	Our organization has in the past or plans to in the future collaborate with other organizations to ensure the best fit for youth volunteers		
5	Youth (people under 30) sit on the board of directors of our organization		
6	Our organization encourages youth volunteers to review and revise the procedures for recruiting other youth volunteers		
7	Our organization has in place or is planning to implement a mentorship program integrating youth volunteers		

Part 3 Supporting and developing youth	AM I DOING THIS WELL?	IF NOT, WHAT CAN I DO?
1 Our organization provides proper training on volunteer duties and other aspects to youth volunteers – and advertises the potential of this training to prospective volunteers		
2 The person in charge of volunteer resources or the person working with youth volunteers keeps track of the skills, objectives and motivations of youth volunteers		
3 Our organization explicitly recognizes the contribution of youth volunteers and they are given an important role in the organization		
4 Our volunteer management resources (staff, online tools, scheduling) are suited to the skill level and understanding of youth volunteers		
5 Youth volunteers with our organization help to actively recruit other youth volunteers and take leadership/mentorship roles for incoming youth		
6 Our organization listens and responds to the needs and ideas of youth volunteers		

Social Media Outreach Template

Social media is a popular means to recruit volunteers online, especially youth. As generations change, different types of social media are popular with different audiences. Knowing the type of posts for the right social media tool and audience will help you effectively recruit volunteers of all ages, especially tech-influenced youth. Use the chart below to plan appropriate posts for each audience:

	TYPE & AGE AUDIENCE	PARAMETERS	POST
Facebook	Social Network 25-55	Text, media & links	Example: Status Update from organization page about exciting upcoming volunteer roles.
Twitter	Microblogging 15-25	280 characters of text, with links & media	Example: Short one-liner about impact and role availability with link to apply
Instagram	Photo Sharing 18-30	Square photos/ short videos with minimal text	Example: Video of “day in the life of a volunteer” with snippets/ individual images
YouTube	Video 14+	Video media only with active comment section	Example: Video created by volunteer managers or past volunteers showing the role and positive aspects
Tumblr	Share-Blog 16-35	Mixed media blog, usually re-shared and re-posted	Example: Viral media or image macro with overlaid text about volunteering, or personal blog post addressing journey of volunteer
Snapchat	Messaging 14-22	Video, photos and text that disappear after viewing	Example: Short, enticing snippet of exciting volunteer opportunity followed by QR code with link to apply
Reddit	News Aggregate 16+	Mixed media, news, text & links for aggregation and re-posting	Example: Can be anything, often reposted from one of the other tools
LinkedIn	Professional Network 24+	Professional text and minimal media uploads, including blogs	Example: Status update, link or blog post about value of volunteering in this role

Getting Buy-In

Often, one of the most difficult aspects of a volunteer manager’s job is to manage how others interact with volunteers. Many volunteer managers report that they encounter significant resistance when trying to involve staff and leaders in engaging volunteers in their programs. This template will give you an idea of how to respond to some common complaints you may come across.

STAFF COMMENT	RESPONSES
<p>“It’s more trouble than it’s worth”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits for the organization – volunteer involvement increases the number of work hours, skills and perspectives contributing to achieving its mission; volunteers act as ambassadors for the organization in the community, and increase its reach and ability to serve its clients. • Benefits for the community your organization serves – volunteer involvement changes the quality/type of services your organization can provide; helps community members connect and work towards common goals & forms relationships between the organization and those it serves. • Benefits for the volunteers – volunteering can provide valuable experience and skills, a sense of community, a social network, and a source of meaning. • Benefits for the staff who work with volunteers – volunteer program can provide them with experience in supervision and management, a group of dedicated and motivated workers, and a bank of skills, resources and time that volunteers are willing to contribute to complete projects that staff would be unable to complete on their own.
<p>“I don’t want someone else to do my job”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers shouldn’t be brought in to do the same work as program staff. • Volunteer roles should supplement the work paid staff members are already doing, by adding value for clients and for the organization that’s not outside of the responsibilities of program staff. • Try to get staff more involved in creating volunteer roles. • Consider doing a needs assessment to find out how volunteers could be useful within the various programs in your organization, such as marketing. • Ask staff to think about projects they wish they could develop or services they wish they could provide that they can’t manage on their own.
<p>“I don’t know how to work with volunteers”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff may need to receive training on the basic elements of volunteer management to understand their role in supervising volunteers, have an understanding of the demands on their time, and feel prepared to bring volunteers into their programs. • Training staff to work with volunteers will help them increase their knowledge of volunteer engagement and help the volunteers have a better experience with your organization while the entire process runs more smoothly. • Improving the initial experience will help staff see the benefits of volunteer involvement. • Use a guide, like the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement, to choose training topics for staff.

STAFF COMMENT	RESPONSES
“I don’t have the time”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This may be true, and may be out of your control. • Staff shouldn’t supervise volunteers unless it is part of their job description. • Management and Board of Directors need to support volunteer involvement. • Supervising volunteers should be an official part of the job description of anyone who takes on the work. • They should be given support to develop the skills they need to supervise volunteers, their job responsibilities should be realistic given the time commitment that volunteer supervision involves, they should be recognized for their efforts in supporting volunteers, and their involvement in volunteer supervision should be taken into account during performance reviews.
“We don’t really need volunteers”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review work-plans and project/program goals to identify areas of need for human resources/volunteer resources. • Explain the benefits of volunteers (see “It’s more trouble than it’s worth”). • Remember your organization’s mission; volunteers help support the organization’s goals in serving the community. • Remind staff of challenges they may have faced in time management and how volunteers can support them.
“Where will they go?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual volunteering and microvolunteering can often be done from people’s homes or other locations, thus not requiring additional office space. • Explore using shared workspace (board room/meeting room). • Some offices can be shared by staff or volunteers to conduct work.

Building Your Case

Use this worksheet to help you build the case for your volunteer program and make a pitch!

Who are your advocates and allies?

Pick your key goal - what are you hoping to achieve, such as more funding, support, space, leadership/direction, professional development? What value and impact can you share?

Plan your pitch and who you're pitching to - choose 3 formal elements of your program to highlight (successful retention, great youth program, etc.), use facts to be persuasive and be sure to make your points clearly

Create a proposal for your first meeting

Resource Assessment Template

Finding the right resources

To help you grow your volunteer program and see continued success, it's vital to get a sense of what resources are available to your organization. By looking to your community, you can identify partners to establish relationships with and look to for support. Use the chart below to help guide your "environmental scan" for each category.



WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR	YOUR ANSWERS
<p>Similar organizations Who is doing work similar to yours? Who can you connect with on the basis of overlapping volunteers?</p>	
<p>Funding What kind of funding exists unique to your area of work? What kind of funding exists unique to your region/area? Who can you talk to about other funding options?</p>	
<p>Political field How do regional and provincial politics impact your volunteer program? How can you connect with politicians for support?</p>	
<p>The (financial and social) economy What impact does the economy have on my program? (more/fewer volunteers, etc.) What trends can help you plan for the future? Will there be a need for your program in 5 years?</p>	
<p>Finding where you fit in How can you leverage relationships to build capacity and resources? How can you use your uniqueness (based on the rest of the environmental scan) to your advantage? What role do your volunteers play in helping to build resources?</p>	

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